



Bakhmut Noose Tightens

Description

A few things to cover today—firstly a few interesting sundry items that've crossed the newsdesk.

For those that haven't seen, an [entire train of Russia's T-14 Armatas](#) was spotted moving reportedly somewhere near Rostov (not far from Ukrainian border). Some have postulated they're headed to Moscow for May 9th parade preparations, but other reports strongly indicated that was not the case.

According to REVERSE SIDE OF THE MEDAL, T-14 Armata tanks were spotted on the border of the Rostov Region.

Apparently, the tanks are not going to the Victory Day Parade, which is May 9.



Russia's latest Bumerang IFV's also headed somewhere.

Along with them, the latest Russian Bumerang IFV's were seen as well. This comes on the heels of

recent photos from a Uralvagonzavod production line, showing Armatas being built next to the T-90M's.



T-14 Armata left, T-90M center.

Could Russia be deploying Armatas en masse to try them out against the coming Leopards/Abrams/Challengers?

Strange goings on in Poland, where apparently a huge batch of disfigured dead bodies was discovered in a mining shaft.

*More than **500 military corpses** found in Polish mine, including military personnel*

The burial ground was found in the Bogdanka coal mine (40 km from the border with Ukraine). Now the Polish military has come to the place to conduct conversations with hard workers. Several miners were taken to Lublin after interrogation.

*There are rumors among the Poles that the **bodies of foreign mercenaries who died in the NVO zone** were brought there. According to another version, these are the bodies of wounded UAF soldiers, who were torn apart into organs, allegedly being taken to Europe for "treatment".*

The miners say that there may be several burial grounds, since the tunnels are periodically filled up.

It is obvious that the Poles will "swallow" this state of emergency, as well as the incident with a Ukrainian missile hitting a Polish tractor.

And another:

POLISH MINERS DISCOVER UKRAINIAN MILITARY CORPSES – WERE DISEMBOWELED FOR ORGAN HARVESTING

? Polish officials are trying to prevent a scandal from breaking out: in the Bogdanka mine, miners discovered a burial approximately five-hundred bodies of men in the remains of military uniforms, some pieces of clothing have chevrons of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

?At the moment, special services are conducting investigations with employees who discovered a terrifying find in an abandoned shaft. After interrogation, some of the miners were transported to Lublin. Many Ukrainians work in the facility (the mine is located 40 km from the Ukrainian border), thanks to which secret information was leaked to Ukraine.

? People say that the bodies found, they say, have been disemboweled, and they are sure that they are wounded Ukrainian soldiers who, under the guise of treatment, were brought to Poland by black market transplantologists.

It's something to file away for now, for future reference. Especially in light of another rumor that the Poles plan to build a base in the Volyn region of Ukraine, staffing it with local Ukrainian territorial defense (for now).

According to an unofficial version, the construction of the base says that the Poles, being drawn into the war, are preparing to increase the size of the Polish group and deploy the appropriate infrastructure. Warsaw continues to prepare a backup plan to send its military

to Western Ukraine if the war drags on. As reported, recently in Ukraine, a subordinate of the Armed Forces of Ukraine “Polish legion” was created, the base of which is located in the Kiev region.

I’ve previously reported the rumor that the Polish president has offered to ‘keep the Western regions warm’ for Ukraine—i.e. annex them ‘temporarily’ so as to prevent Russia from attacking them, the logic being that Russia wouldn’t attack a territory being ‘squatted’ on by a full-fledged NATO member.

And for those who might balk, and perhaps either weren’t following the conflict from the get-go, or have short memories, allow me to remind you that almost exactly a year ago from today, [Poland had already openly called for NATO intervention](#) in Ukraine—not only in the form of a ‘peace-keeper mission’ but even a ‘no fly zone’.

The White House responded to Poland's calls send NATO troops to Ukraine as peacekeepers

March 22 2022  99

So these rumors are not to be taken likely. Similar to how Erdogan slowly eased his way into Idlib province under various pretexts, feigning various humanitarian intervention but in reality converting northern Syria into an ostensible extension of Turkey. Not only were the schools slowly taken over by Turk teachers, teaching Turkish curriculum, but the utilities and infrastructure was slowly connected to and entwined with that of Turkey.

Similarly here, Poland will likely (if they aren’t already, under our noses) try to creep into Western Ukraine.

As for Bakhmut news, things are looking ever grimmer for the AFU. All roads are now under either full or partial fire control, and it shows. Many videos show destroyed convoys of civilian-requisitioned vehicles used by the AFU. And by the way, ‘fire control’ doesn’t only refer to inaccurate artillery, which could allow vehicles to still sneak by, but depending on terrain, the most effective type of fire control is actually via ATGM’s, which can completely lock down a road with accurate destruction of any moving vehicle.

However, some reports claim that reinforcements from Ukraine’s reserve, which was meant to be prepared for the ‘Spring Offensive’ are already being tapped and sent to shore up the crumbling Bakhmut defenses:

A column of Emirati armored vehicles Panthera T6 of the Ukrainian army on the way to

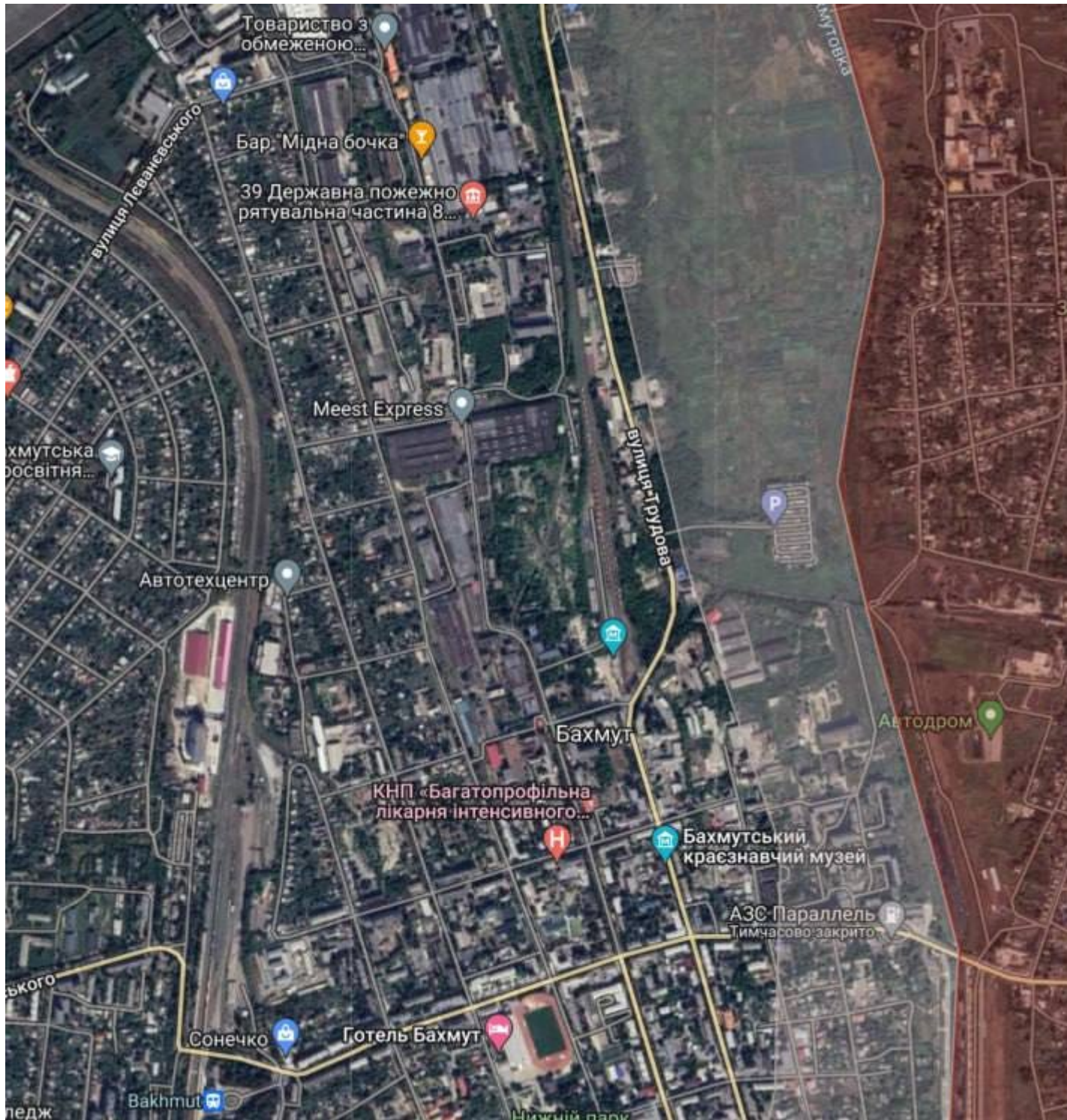
Bakhmut (Artyomovsk).

According to known information, these armored vehicles were in service with the newly formed 47th and 88th separate mechanized brigades of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which may indicate that the enemy even transferred his strategic reserves near Bakhmut.

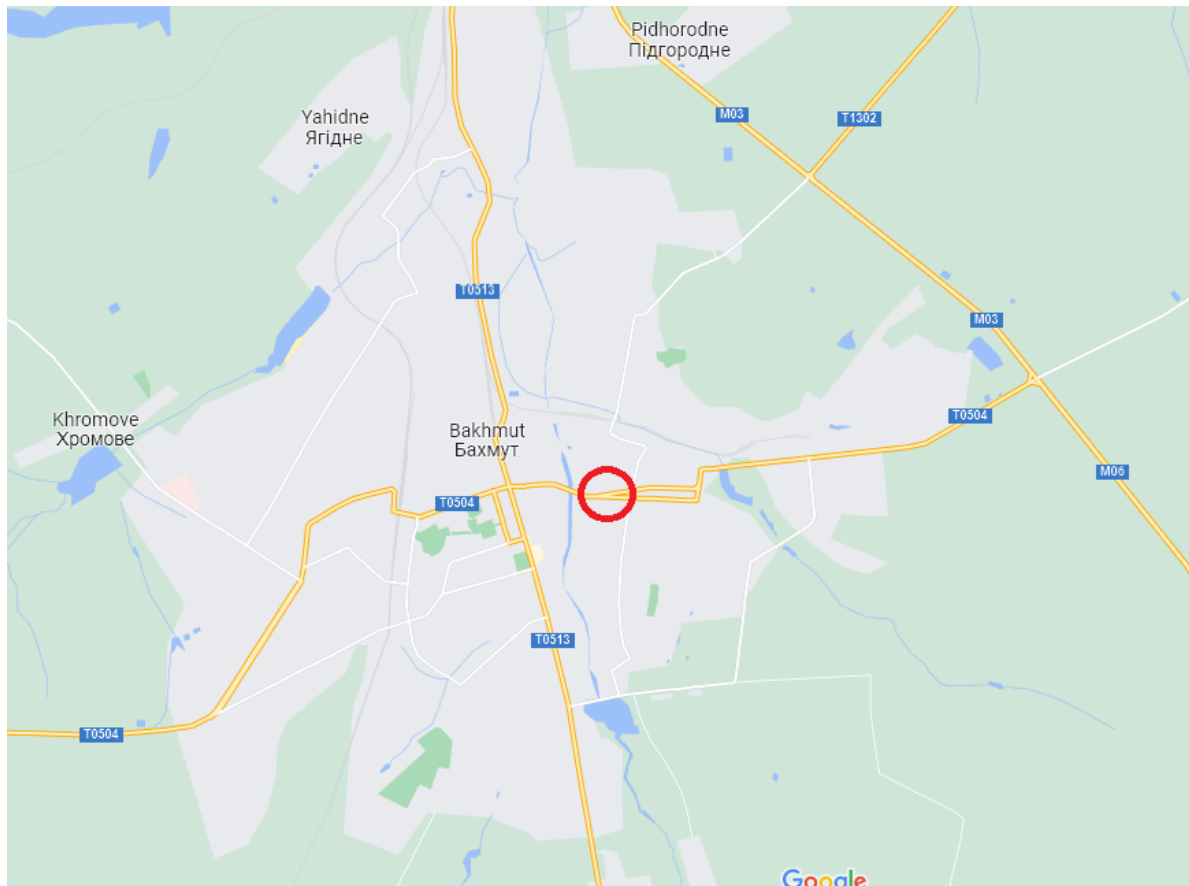
How to explain the fact that new reinforcements are allegedly streaming in while there's clear proof of mass retreats as well? Simple: most of the retreat videos are from the eastern parts of Bakhmut which were entirely given up, and other areas to the northwest (Berkhovka and Yahidne). However, reinforcements are being sent to the main western bulk of the city itself.



Reportedly, almost everything east of the Bakhmutovka River (which divides Bakhmut nearly in half) has now been taken, as visualized in the map above. And there are some further geolocated proofs, such as [this video of Wagner forces raising the flag](#) over a known landmark near the city center.



More zoomed out view:



However, there has been geolocated video showing some of the 'retreated' AFU troops walking into Konstantinovka (48.516248, 37.753836), a good 15km from Western Bakhmut. So there are definitely some units completely leaving the city, but other new ones are coming in. This could either be rotation or jibe with reports that the more 'elite' units are being removed and replaced with cannonfodder in an attempt to attrit Wagner forces.

The Ukrainian Armed Forces are withdrawing forces from the central and western districts of Bakhmut. At the moment, the most combat-ready formations are withdrawing from the combat zone. At the same time, while some units are resisting and conducting sorties, creating a corridor for the withdrawal of troops under the blows of artillery and aviation of the Russian troops.

These efforts are aimed only at buying time and delaying the Russian units as much as possible. (Rybar)

Another take is that the units with the most losses were allowed to retreat to allow reconstitution:

According to incoming information, the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine with the greatest losses received the go-ahead to retreat from Artemivsk (Bakhmut).

According to the Military Chronicle, units of the 24th and 63rd mechanized brigades, the 21st motorized infantry battalion and the 3rd operational brigade of the NSU were ordered

to collect the remaining weapons and ammunition that can be evacuated from the city on light vehicles by Monday (March 6) and start leaving in small groups of up to a platoon with at intervals of 25 minutes. Presumably, heavy and seriously damaged equipment of these units will be abandoned due to fears of airstrikes by the Russian Aerospace Forces and artillery, and exit in large groups (companies and battalions) will be prohibited.

According to incoming data, units of the 93rd mechanized brigade, as well as units of the 241st territorial Defense Brigade, which were not in contact, will be left in the city, and the remaining units of the 4th and 17th tank brigades may be sent to strengthen them.

But this is not to prematurely write Bakhmut off quite yet. Even Prigozhin continues to insist there's still danger, and that these new reinforcements are gathering in an attempt to flank Wagner forces from multiple sides.

Today Prigozhin issued another call of alarm, claiming that he needs reinforcements and more ammo once again, even stating that a direct subordinate of his was booted/denied entry to a Russian staff HQ where he was headed to make his appeal—thus rekindling the ongoing Russian MoD vs. Prigozhin saga.

Elsewhere there have been reports (from DPR forces near Avdeevka area) that recently the ammo/shell problems have been ameliorated and they are again receiving all the ammo they need.

[Germany's top newspaper Bild reports](#) that Zelensky has a major disagreement with his top general Zaluzhny regarding the withdrawal, or lack thereof, of Bakhmut. However, perhaps to do damage control, [Zelensky quickly released a video statement](#) claiming that it was in fact the general staff (Zaluzhny and Syrsky) who advised him to defend and reinforce Bakhmut.

One important note that needs to be made vis a vis Bakhmut. A lot of palaver on the Twittersphere revolves around the argument whether Bakhmut is 'strategically important' or not. Both sides attempt to 'gotcha' the other by highlighting how much effort and blood is being expended to win this town. Certainly, Ukrainian officials have been caught disingenuously spinning yarns when just two months ago, Zelensky declared Bakhmut to be the all-important red line, and now some are pushing the narrative that it's insignificant.

But the people squabbling over its strategic worth miss the finer point: which is that it's principally irrelevant if Bakhmut has 'strategic' value or not. As I've outlined before, in September of 2022, Vladimir Putin signed a decree officially welcoming the Donetsk Oblast as an official, constitutional territory of the Russian Federation.

In short, this means 'strategy' has nothing to do with it—Russian forces are *legally* obligated to liberate this now 'occupied Russian territory' from the invader. It's as simple as that. Even if it was the least strategically significant parcel of land on Holy Earth, they've still got to liberate it as it is now 100% legal Russian territory in the eyes of the Russian constitution. Let's not be hoodwinked into thinking Russia has been 'tricked' into dying over 'strategically irrelevant land'—it's a smokescreen to hide the truth.

As a small digression, two small bits to relate. First, an interesting statement from Prigozhin regarding AFU fighters' penchants for stimulants (amongst other things):

*Yevgeny Prigozhin: "Based on the experience of almost a year of participation in the hostilities of the Wagner PMC, almost **50% of the killed fighters of the Armed Forces of Ukraine have on themselves various pills, salts, amphetamines, and so on.** Therefore, psychotropic substances that allow the fighters of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to lower pain thresholds, increase activity, as well as reduce the degree of fear, are widespread in the Ukrainian army."*

And the second, a quite humorous Bakhmut anecdote hit the wires today by way of reputable war correspondent Alexander Kots.

Wagner in Artemovsk told a fiery story:

The other day, a fighter came to our positions to have a cigarette. He was no different from the Wagnerites, he treated himself, lit a cigarette ... And then the enemy rolled over. Everyone rushed to repel the attack, and the guest also grabbed the machine gun, pointing it at the "enemies". Managed to destroy seven attackers.

After the fever of the battle, they sat down to fill the magazines with cartridges, and then our hero suddenly realized that he had entered the wrong trench. And he repulsed the attack not of the "orcs-Muscovites", but of his brothers. The fighter of the Armed Forces of Ukraine was praised and even promised to be presented for an award for such performance. And sent to the rest of the prisoners.

In case the auto-translation fails for some—in short: the Ukrainian soldier accidentally entered the Wagner trench and when they were attacked by AFU, helped Wagner repel the attackers, killing seven of his own, only to later realize what he had done.

Wild as it may sound, this is at least the half-dozen time I've heard a similar tale so far in this war. One of the stories was even caught [on video here](#).

It seems in very close quarter fighting, against a 'brotherly adversary' who looks and speaks just like you—and especially in the dusky evening hours, or even in the middle of the night—it's quite common for soldiers to accidentally enter the 'wrong trench' and go completely unnoticed.

A few other disparate pieces of news:

The Wall Street Journal writes that high losses of the Ukrainian Armed Forces near Bakhmut may disrupt the planned spring offensive of Ukrainian troops. "Ukrainian brigades have great differences in the level of training and morale, and they do not always have proper communication with each other."

The commander of one of the companies of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said that his positions were occupied by "Wagner" to the south of Bakhmut, because the neighboring

battalion, recruited from volunteers with poor training, left the area assigned to them without prior warning. According to Ukrainian commanders, Wagner's tactics are to target these weak units, " the WSJ journalist notes.

This seems to confirm that a lot of the replacement units in Bakhmut appear to be of an unmistakably inferior variety. And the Western controllers are now fearful that this may disrupt the big planned Spring Offensive.

In fact, popular Russian channel *Starshe Edda* posited a very good point about this. That Zaluzhny needs to make a very big wave in the next offensive akin to last year's Fall Kharkov one, otherwise recruitment for new fodder will dry up afterwards. Much of the recruitment of the past six months was driven by the huge 'psychological victory' of the Kharkov Counter-offensive, which coupled with massive media amplification, allowed the AFU to regain the psychological edge necessary to convince the thinning populace that the war's worth the fighting, and possible to win.

But if the big, 'last hurrah' Spring Offensive doesn't work out, they will be left with nothing, and no one will believe the AFU has a chance after that. This is why Zelensky and several other high-ranking western leaders have called this coming offensive as the key turning point. Unfortunately, its chances are now being eroded as Zelensky's already 'skimming off the top' of the fresh reserves earmarked for that coming fight.

With that said, we should emphasize that retreating Ukrainian forces in Bakhmut have been absolutely hectorated, savaged, and decimated by Wagner artillery. One can see examples [here](#), and much more [poignant yet gruesome ones here](#).



In other news:

Mounting reports point to Russia increasingly using a new generation of guided glidebombs for the first time. One note of distinction: Russian military parlance appears to have a slightly different classification of 'glidebomb' than most are used to in the Western inventories. They're not true, traditional glidebombs, outwardly at least, in the same light as Jdams and SDB's, in that they don't have the same type of fold-out wings, and have a shorter range than most traditional, Western glidebombs.

Russia has tested one-and-a-half-ton gliding bombs. Russia for the first time hit Ukraine with new planning 1500-kg bombs, (UPAB-1500B) — Defense Express.

On the Avdiivka direction. Reset range 40 km. Out of the zone of operation of the AFU air defense forces, which allows for targeted bombing without much risk to the carrier. This will allow us to “take out” especially fortified enemy positions much easier and faster.

These new Russian ones are primarily the UPAB-1500 and PBK-500U Drel

As can be seen by the bottom right-most photo, the fins/wings do extend outward to create quite a lot of control surface / surface area—after all, if you note the total surface area on an American glidebomb, it's not that much:



In fact, another angle of the PBK-500U Drel shows just how much surface area ‘unfurls’ when it’s dropped:



With that said, it's quite difficult to imagine how exactly it will glide or work in general, seeing as how it's brand new and no footage of it yet exists. All we have is the purported spec sheet which claims they can glide upwards of 40-50km, with future versions promising a Jdam/SDB-matching 70km+. Of

course, as I [explained in this article](#), it's only with the provision that they're dropped from max altitude of upwards of 12-15km (~30-35k feet).

Ultimately, this and the Armata/Bumerang production materials quoted at the outset, are a good indication that Russia's MIC is humming along. And on that note:

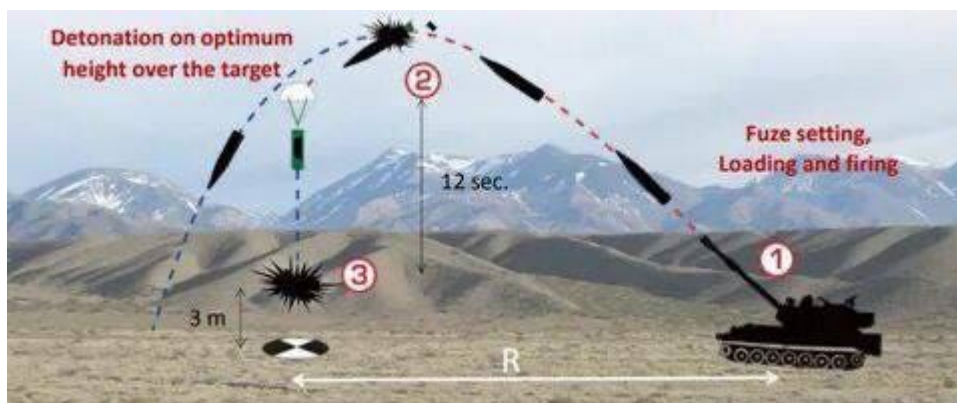
MI6 transmitted new intelligence to the Presidential Office and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine about increasing the pace of production of the Russian military-industrial complex in 2022. According to British intelligence, over the past year, Russia has increased the production of tanks for the army to 740 units and about 8000 thousand various heavy equipment.

This wire is corroboration of figures from a previous report where I outlined how Russia's total tank production, counting both new and refurb/refit units, is somewhere in the 800-1000+ region now, as they were producing ~200 brand new tanks per year previously, and refurb/refitting a further 600+, but Shoigu ordered the industries to double the production of new tanks last year.

So this is further confirmation that Russia would have fully made up its [MBT](#) losses already, which after a year of the SMO were likely only in the 400-600 region. Of course, that's not to say there isn't still a major strain on supply due to having to replenish LDNR inventories as well—but it all depends on what capacities LDNR has in doing their own refurb/refits from delivered Russian mothballed stock; we know there's some, but not the exact extent.

And lastly in war-tech news, more evidence of the use of advanced [German SMART sensor-fuzed clusterbomb](#) was found in Donetsk.

These are advanced munitions fired from artillery units which descend over armor and intelligently 'sense' them via millimeter wave radar, then hit them in the soft roof.



Just further reason not to underestimate the AFU—they are using quite a number of highly advanced systems, and where they lack numerically, they make up for it with situational awareness via NATO C4ISR.

by Simplicius The Thinker

Category

1. Army-Wars-Conflict Zones-Military Tech.
2. Main

Date Created

03/09/2023