



Wagner Chief Clarifies That Only His Forces Making Gains In Bakhmut

Description

Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin clarified late Saturday in an audio statement that despite regular Russian forces having “retreated” from parts of Bakhmut’s north (in his words), **his own Wagner fighters are still advancing**. So it seems his power struggle with the military chain of command and defense ministry continues, as he persists in his controversial narrative that it’s only his company that’s spearheading gains and engaged in heavy fighting (akin to the battle for Soledar).

Prigozhin stressed that Wagner advanced today, and that Ukraine controls only 1 square km in Bahmut and remains in control of just 29 or so tall buildings.

??Wagner PMCs advanced up to 550 meters in different directions — Prigozhin
pic.twitter.com/3Nbb21yrl1

— War Monitor (@WarMonitors) [May 13, 2023](#)

Meanwhile TASS has cited the head of an elite Russian unit to say that intensified Ukrainian engagement has only happened along some parts of the [frontlines](#):

Commander of the Akhmat commando unit and Deputy Commander of the 2nd Army Corps Apt. Alaudinov said on Saturday that **Ukrainian troops increased their activity only in some sectors of the line of engagement.**

Earlier, Yan Gagrin, an advisor to Acting DPR Head Denis Pushilin, reported that Ukrainian units had become more active along the entire line of combat engagement.

“The Ukrainian units became active not along the entire line of combat engagement, **only in certain parts and still the situation has not significantly changed,**” Alaudinov told TASS.

“The situation is completely under control in our sector,” he added.

The day prior, the defense ministry acknowledged some degree of a pullback in limited sectors in the north of the city. Prigozhin had described the regular forces as “fleeing” – a characterization which was denied by the Kremlin.

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Shortly after a Russian military helicopter crash was reported early Saturday in a region near the Ukrainian border, **a second crash of an aircraft has been reported**, at a moment of continuing general bad news for Moscow related to the Ukraine war. Possibly a third aircraft downing has also been reported – all within a matter of hours.

“An Su-34 fighter jet crashed in Bryansk Region, Russia near the Ukrainian border, minutes after reports that an unidentified helicopter also went down in the area, TASS news agency reported on Saturday, citing sources,” state media is reporting.



Details on casualties weren't initially revealed, but images and video circulating on social media show what appears to be a crash site, including the jet's tail and engine on fire.

The jet crash reportedly happened near the village of Istrovka north of the Ukrainian border, and unofficial military channels online are saying the pilot and navigator were killed.

Just hours before news of the jet crash emerged, a Russian Mi-8 helicopter separately caught fire and crashed. **It may have been shot down.** *Newsweek* is meanwhile suggesting that a total of two helicopters crashed within the same time frame, reporting that—

A Su-34 combat jet and a Mi-8 helicopter came down on Saturday, according to Russia's state-owned Tass news agency.

Russian online news channel Mash posted on Telegram that another Mi-8 helicopter and a Su-35 warplane crashed in the same area on Saturday.

There's also growing speculation that given multiple aircraft came down in the same region, it **may have been from a Ukrainian attack on the aircraft**, but this is unconfirmed:

*This was also reported by Russian media outlet Readovka, who said: **"Two helicopters and fighter-bombers were shot down by the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Our pilots were ambushed and we are talking about a carefully planned operation."***

Newsweek has been unable to independently verify reports of the additional crashes.

BREAKING: Ukraine claims RUSSIA LOST 4 AIRCRAFT in ONE DAY!!!

Two Mi-8s Attack Helicopters, one Su-35 and one Su-34 were shot down/crashed in Bryansk region. [#aircraft](#) [#Su34](#) [#Su35](#) [#Mi8](#) [#crash](#) [#helicopter](#) [#fighterjet](#) [#Bryansk](#) [#Ukraine](#) [#Russia](#) pic.twitter.com/uqxBNhKvD2

— EurAsian Times (@THEEURASIATIMES) [May 13, 2023](#)

A Reuters national security correspondent is counting **four total downed aircraft on Saturday, citing Russian state sources:**

May 13 (Reuters) – The Russian news outlet Kommersant reported that two Russian fighter jets and two military helicopters had been shot down on Saturday close to the Ukrainian border, in what would be a spectacular coup for Kyiv if confirmed.

— Idrees Ali (@idreesali114) [May 13, 2023](#)

The day prior, on Friday, a Mi-28 military helicopter had **crashed during a training flight in Crimea**, after which the defense ministry confirmed that two pilots were killed.

TASS cited defense officials who described, “At 3:42 p.m. (Moscow time) on May 12, 2023, a Mi-28 helicopter crashed during its scheduled training flight in the Dzhankoi district of the Republic of Crimea. The helicopter performed its flight without an ammunition load. There is no destruction on the ground. Both pilots died.”

The military statement said the crash in Crimea was due to a “**technical failure**” of the attack helicopter but said a further investigation is ongoing.

Overall this has been **a bad past week and even month so far for Russia and its war efforts.**

??[#BREAKING](#) A helicopter crash in Klintsy, Bryansk region, Russia pic.twitter.com/YQZ8hfMCAZ

— War Monitor (@WarMonitors) [May 13, 2023](#)

There’s not only been a spate of these deadly aerial incidents in the past 24 hours, but Russian territory is coming under increased drone attack from Ukraine, and oil facilities in particular have been targeted and significantly damaged. In addition the defense ministry acknowledged that Russian military positions have **pulled back in some areas of northern Bakhmut**, following prior months of steady gains.

Yevgeny Prigozhin, head of the Wagner forces, **has called it a “rout”** – as the open feud between himself and the top military command has also been a likely cause of ‘**low morale**’ and is somewhat embarrassing on an international stage.

*At this point it remains unconfirmed and uncertain whether these Saturday jet and helicopter crashes were the result of cross-border shootdowns. **If so it would mark a huge escalation and leap in Ukraine's capabilities**, including the **possibility of Western advanced offensive weapons being used**:*

/15. Russian media – “The aircrafts that crashed in the Bryansk region were shot down not from the territory of Russia – the Armed Forces of ?? attacked it from the Chernihiv region, Ukraine”.

P.S: distance from the ?? border to geolocated crash site of one of Mi-8 is about 50 km
pic.twitter.com/di9dvpuvaA

— Special Kherson Cat ??? (@bayraktar_1love) [May 13, 2023](#)

Reuters summarized of the battlefield developments [by Friday](#):

Moscow acknowledged on Friday that its forces had fallen back north of Ukraine's battlefield city of Bakhmut after a new Ukrainian offensive, in a retreat that the head of Russia's Wagner private army called a rout.

*The **setback** for Russia, which follows similar reports of Ukrainian advances south of the city, suggests a coordinated push by Kyiv to encircle Russian forces in Bakhmut, Moscow's main objective for months during the war's bloodiest fighting.*

*“In three days of counter-offensive activity, the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the Bakhmut sector have **liberated 17.3 sq. km (6.6 sq. miles) of territory**,” Serhiy Cherevatyi, spokesman for the “east” group of Ukrainian forces, said on the Telegram messaging app.*

*Both sides are now reporting **the biggest Ukrainian gains in six months**, although Ukraine has given few details and played down suggestions a huge, long-planned counteroffensive has officially begun.*

Additionally days ago Moscow's big Victory Day parade was widely reported as “muted” and lacking in tanks and other military hardware that is typically on display.

Ukrainian officials have mocked all of this as showing weakness, also while Kiev's spring counteroffensive may be imminent, or is perhaps already begun. All the while, Ukraine's cross-border attacks are only growing bolder, and it doesn't seem the Kremlin can do anything about it.

Yet, despite what appear to be significant Russian military setbacks, Ukraine frontlines in many places are still getting pounded. For example, the below video is purportedly of a recent Russian strike in Western Ukraine, possibly on Friday or Saturday (with footage just emerging):

Big hit by Russian missile or drone in Khmelnytsky this morning.

pic.twitter.com/mCUsvQbyw8

— Russians With Attitude (@RWApodcast) [May 13, 2023](#)

And here:

Probably the clearest footage I've seen of the enormous hit this morning in Khmelnytsky.
pic.twitter.com/6rGQMqOUgf

— Big Serge ?????? (@witte_sergei) [May 13, 2023](#)

As for the much-touted spring counteroffensive by Ukraine forces, it's as yet unclear whether this is in full swing or not. While there have been moves on the ground, Zelensky has so far denied that it's begun, saying his forces must "wait".

by Tyler Durden

Category

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