

Military Aid = “Junk Weapons”? Germany’s Leopards, IRIS-Ts Not Holding Up Well in Ukraine

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[Al Mayadeen English](#)

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The German equipment used in Ukraine is not holding up too well, with reports on Thursday saying the Leopard tanks and the IRIS-T surface-to-air missile systems handed to Ukraine were hit by Russian fire, causing them to be badly damaged and even destroyed in the process.

The Russian armed forces, using loitering munitions, eliminated a radar station of an IRIS-T air defense system.

In the wake of the revelation, the Russian Defense Ministry published footage depicting the target being essentially wiped out.

“The UAV units of the Airborne Forces detected the position of an IRIS-T SLM air defense system after which a strike with loitering munitions was delivered on the multifunctional radar station. The radar station was eliminated with a strike by an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV),” a commentary to the video said.

Destruction of an Iris-T radar rendering the system useless.

Reportedly in Orekhiv direction. pic.twitter.com/5SdpF4L2Xp

— ayden (@squatsons) [June 7, 2023](#)

The first IRIS-Ts were [handed to Ukraine](#) back in October 2022. German newspaper *Der Spiegel* reported at the time that Berlin planned to deliver four systems to Kiev. The handover was made near the Polish-Ukrainian border.

The delivery was made at a time when reports were saying for months the German military was [running out of weapons](#) that can be sent to Ukraine, with Kiev still projected to be dependent on defense assistance from Berlin.

Leopard 2s seen for the first time

According to Russian sources, drone footage taken yesterday during the Ukrainian offensive near the city of Orikhiv in the Zaporozhye region appears to show at least two German-made Leopard 2 tanks as well as several armored personnel carriers, including American M113s, that are under fire from Russian artillery.

What Leopards doing? pic.twitter.com/hg0ldC30hB

— ZOKA (@200_zoka) [June 8, 2023](#)

Numerous pieces of equipment appear to have been destroyed.

These images represent the first visual confirmation that Ukrainian forces are employing Leopard 2 tanks in active combat.

Ka 52 continue to strike tractors □ pic.twitter.com/hFWuEK6hoU

— ZOKA (@200_zoka) [June 8, 2023](#)

It is still not possible to verify that the targets burning in the images are Leopard 2 tanks or that they have been damaged or destroyed, with the equipment struck by Russian artillery seeming to be Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) or Infantry Fighting Vehicles (IFVs).

German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius revealed in April that Germany and its allies have given dozens of Leopard tanks to Ukraine.

“Together with the Poles and other allies, we are supplying two battalions of Leopard 2, a little over 60 battle tanks. Up to four more battalions of Leopard 1 tanks will be added until next year. This is over 100 tanks. Our American and British allies will also hand over tanks,” Pistorius said.

NATO countries do not have spare battle tanks awaiting shipment and that it is possible to cover Ukraine’s needs in the mid-term, he revealed.

Additionally, Germany pledged in May to send Kiev some \$3 billion worth of military aid, with German media saying it was Berlin’s greatest military support package to Kiev.

The publication revealed that Berlin intends to supply Ukraine with 20 Marder infantry combat vehicles, 30 Leopard 1 tanks, up to 200 reconnaissance drones, Gepard anti-aircraft vehicles, extra IRIS-T anti-aircraft missiles, artillery rounds, and transporters.

The Russian Defense Ministry also reported that using high-precision guided missiles, Moscow’s forces were able to engage uncovered self-propelled artillery positions and supporting armored vehicles, publishing footage showing the damage inflicted upon the

Ukrainian side.

Heavy fighting in Zaporozhye

The Ukrainian military sustained huge casualties in its attempted night attacks in the Zaporozhye area towards Tokmak, Vladimir Rogov, chairman of the We Are Together with Russia movement, said Thursday.

“I can’t recall that such massive night attacks took place before. I believe that under their plans they thought that they could shield themselves from our aviation at night and that our aircraft would operate less efficiently. I have no other explanation,” Rogov told a live podcast on *Komsomolskaya Pravda* radio.

“They have sustained huge casualties on minefields, from air and artillery strikes and they simply show disregard for losses and throw troops into action wave after wave,” he added.

Moreover, the Ukrainian offensive was preceded by artillery strikes.

“Late in the evening, they began shelling our positions in the Tokmak area, south and southeast of the town of Orekhov, and then launched an attack but this attack was rebuffed and at about 3:00 a.m. Moscow time, they again retreated. Literally in an hour, by 4:00 a.m. Moscow time, they launched a new and far more massive attack,” he explained.

The aforementioned damage sustained by Kiev’s forces was dealt with in the aftermath of the offensive, which led Russia to go on an onslaught on its Western front.

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Featured image: Screenshot from drone video footage showing Ukrainian Leopard tanks getting hit by Russian artillery in the Zaporozhye direction (Social media / Telegram: ZA_FROHT)

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