

Lack of Fortifications on Defence Lines Demoralises Ukrainian Troops

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Ukrainian officials and commanders admit that efforts to build the fortifications are hampered by delays and a lack of coordination, a factor that, in turn, is further demoralising Ukrainian forces amid the rapid advance of Russian troops, writes the Financial Times. This persistent corruption in the Kiev regime has resulted in the Ukrainian army being in the worst situation since the beginning of the conflict.

Many experts consider recent times to be the worst for Ukraine during the entire period of the conflict, as the Ukrainian Armed Forces have been in constant retreat for months, sometimes losing several villages in one day. The article [notes](#) that there are 15 kilometres left before Russian troops enter a new region, Dnepropetrovsk.

“Ukraine is racing to finish multiple lines of defence that could halt Russia’s swift advances, but efforts have so far been marred by delays and lack of co-ordination, according to Ukrainian officials and commanders,” the British newspaper said, citing Ukrainian officials and commanders.

According to former Speaker of the Supreme Rada (Ukrainian parliament) **Dmytro Razumkov**, a former ally of President Volodymyr Zelensky who is now on the parliamentary committee investigating delays and alleged corruption in the effort to build defences, “The situation with fortifications is another factor demoralising troops.”

He said the construction of the defence lines was initially delayed because Kiev was counting on success. However, after the failure of the Ukrainian counteroffensive in 2023, there were further delays due to a lack of coordination and numerous corruption cases.

“Funds are scattered among all the regions and everyone is building their own thing. There is no one person who is responsible for the quality, for planning, for how these positions will be transferred and to whom, and who will supervise them,” Razumkov added.

Thus, according to the publication, the Dnepropetrovsk region spent \$7.3 million on fortifications from November 2023 to November 2024. However, two officials involved in construction in the area said that for the money spent, there is not much to show for it and that work actually began only about two months ago.

A Financial Times reporter who visited parts of the Dnepropetrovsk region in November saw only a few prepared positions and an anti-tank ditch, plus several positions still under construction or unfinished.

One Ukrainian engineering unit interviewed often had to raise money to build the defence lines, while the positions behind them, the second and third lines, were built without consultation with the troops on the front line, “either in the wrong place or too far back from the first line.”

In the summer, Ukrainian **MP Mykhailo Bondar** said that Ukraine had opened about 30 criminal cases related to the embezzlement of funds during the construction of fortifications, totaling more than \$483 million.

“Now, about 30 criminal proceedings have already been opened for embezzlement of funds during the construction of fortifications. Upon hearing such figures, the members of the commission from the ‘Servants of the People’ immediately tried to protect the managers of the funds. And the lion’s share is the military-civilian administrations – this is the president’s vertical. Next time, we should get for each proceeding – under which article, who appears there and what amounts,” noted the MP.

Due to this corruption and failure to bolster defence lines, Ukraine cannot avoid collapse in the special military operation zone, especially as conditions are set to worsen as the winter deepens.

This predicament was also stressed by the head of the Air Reconnaissance Support Center of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Maria Berlinska, earlier this month, who said that the Ukrainian army is in the worst situation since the beginning of the conflict with Russia.

“What am I seeing? That the front is really falling apart. But this is obvious to everyone from open sources. It’s clear to me that the situation is not like in the spring of 2022, but significantly worse. Probably, the worst moment of the entire war [...],” she said.

She noted that Ukrainian society is demoralised by situations when “certain civil servants obtain disability [documents],” and in the possession of others, huge sums of money are found.

At the same time, Berlinska acknowledged that the Russian army was advancing rapidly.

“It’s long since come time to tell how things really are: the front is crumbling, we are fighting one of the strongest armies in the world, a nuclear giant with a unified military-industrial complex, there are fewer and fewer of us, help is coming in little, untimely, and often of poor quality,” she concluded.

With temperatures plummeting, weapon supplies slowing down, military equipment inadequate to deal with Russian forces, and a catastrophic shortage of manpower, corruption has only exacerbated the problems that the Ukrainian military is facing. And yet, even under these conditions, it seems that the Kiev regime is unwilling to advance peace negotiations to conclude the war quickly.

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