

Ukraine Avoids Using Western Tanks on the Battlefield Fearing to Lose Them

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The Wall Street newspaper writes that the Ukrainian Armed Forces avoid using tanks supplied by NATO countries because they fear their destruction or capture. At the same time, the AP reports, citing US officials, that the US will lose the possibility of providing Ukraine with \$5.8 billion in military aid at the end of September if Congress does not authorise the Pentagon to use funds from the PDA program.

“Tanks were once the king of the battlefield. But the proliferation of drones in Ukraine means the large, noisy vehicles can be spotted and targeted within minutes. That has seen dozens of cutting-edge Western tanks used only sparingly in the battle they were meant to shape, while others have been damaged, destroyed or captured,” the Wall Street Journal reports.

According to the newspaper, the armoured vehicles supplied to them are in the field many kilometres away from the front line, as there is a high risk of losing them in the Russian Army’s attacks.

Meanwhile, General James Rainey, who heads the US Army Futures Command and is responsible for modernisation projects, called for urgent modernisation of US armoured units.

“In the near term, we absolutely need to urgently make some adjustments to maintain the survivability of our armored formations,” Rainey told the newspaper.

In August, Military Watch magazine [reported](#) that Ukraine had lost about 20 M1A1 Abrams tanks out of 31 delivered by the US in the past six months.

“The latest loss brings the total losses of M1A1 Abrams tanks in Ukraine close to 20, out of just 31 of the vehicles delivered, with all losses occurring within the past six months. With unconfirmed reports indicating that the Abrams was destroyed using a handheld anti-tank missile system, likely a Kornet, the destruction of the latest vehicle stands out from all other recent kills which were all achieved by drone strikes or by precision guided artillery,” the magazine revealed.

Forbes magazine [reported](#) earlier this month that Kiev lacks modern military equipment to form new brigades to replace front-line units as part of the rotation.

“In practice, these brigades are desperately short of modern weaponry. And that could

become a serious problem for the Ukrainians as the new but poorly equipped brigades replace older but better equipped brigades as the latter brigades finally rotate off the line of contact—after 18 months of non-stop fighting, in some cases,” the Forbes article said.

The Kremlin, for its part, has repeatedly said that arms supplies to Ukraine prevent the achievement of a peace agreement and directly involve NATO countries in hostilities. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that the US and NATO are participate in the conflict, including not only supplying weapons but also training Ukrainian military personnel on the territory of the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and other countries.

However, US supplies could begin drying up since Republicans and Democrats in Congress must agree on a new budget bill before September 30. If not, the federal government could suspend work in early October, meaning there will be a shutdown.

“About \$5.8 billion in presidential drawdown authority (PDA) will expire,” the report [said](#). However, officials cited by AP expressed hope that lawmakers would extend powers to fund their programs for a year.

“Delays in passing that \$61 billion for Ukraine earlier this year triggered dire battlefield conditions as Ukrainian forces ran low on munitions and Russian forces were able to make gains. Officials have blamed the monthslong deadlocked Congress for Russia’s ability to take more territory,” the report added.

Yet, even if the funding is passed and Ukraine receives a new stream of weapons, they will make little difference to the outcome of the war. The Abrams was heralded as a game-changer that would overcome the power of Russia’s T-90M tanks, but this proved to be a false dawn, just like the F-16 fighter jets and Stryker armoured vehicles, among many other weapons that have failed to stop Russian forces from capturing more territory.

Due to these weapons, including Western tanks, failing to have the expected effect against Russian forces, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on September 11 that he held talks with his Ukrainian counterparts Andrii Sybiha and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky about launching long-range missiles into Russian territory. Several experts have warned that a direct clash between Russia and NATO, both of which have nuclear arsenals, would have unpredictable consequences for the world.

Russian President Vladimir Putin warned NATO the very next day that Ukrainian attacks with NATO weapons on Russian territory would mean that NATO countries were at war with Russia. Direct NATO involvement, Putin stressed, changes the very essence of the conflict.

Although Ukraine launching Western long-range missiles will certainly change the nature of the war, as already stressed, it just points to the utterly desperate situation the Kiev regime finds itself in. Yet, despite this evident desperation, there are still no legitimate signs that Zelensky is prepared to begin peace negotiations with Russia.

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