

Video: Armenia Launches Ballistic Missiles on Azerbaijan Amid Retreat in Nagorno-Karabakh Region

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On the morning of October 22, Armenian forces launched ballistic missiles at targets inside the territory of Azerbaijan. According to the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry, 3 missiles were fired in the direction of the Siyazan region, two in the direction of the Gabala region, and one in the direction of the Kurdamir region. Baku claimed that the strike was aimed at the civilian population and civilian infrastructure. The report provided no details regarding the type of missiles employed. Nonetheless, Armenian forces have so far only employed R-17 Elbrus and OTR-21 Tochka missiles. The Armenian Armed Forces also have several much more modern 9K720 Iskander shot-range ballistic missile systems, but the complex has not yet been employed because the leadership of Armenia is in no hurry to enter a full-out war with Azerbaijan to protect the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (also known as the Republic of Artsakh).

The Armenian Defense Ministry denounced the reports as fake but it should be noted that Yerevan was also denying a ballistic missile strike on the Azerbaijani city of Ganja on October 16, a strike , which killed or injured several dozens of civilians. Later, Armenian sources spent much time marking military objects located in the city on maps. However, the civilian casualties from that strike are the confirmed fact. In their turn, Azerbaijan claims that it has destroyed at least 3 Armenian tactical ballistic complexes. A few of them were struck on the Armenian border area near Karabakh.

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On the evening of October 21 and the morning of October 22 , Azerbaijani forces were developing their offensive operations in the Aghdere-Aghdam, Fizuli-Jabrayil, and Zangilan-Gubadli directions. The Azerbaijani military claimed that it had captured important grounds in Gubadli and destroyed the D-20 battery of the 155th artillery regiment of the Armenian Armed Forces in the Khojavend area. In the Aghdere area, Azerbaijani forces allegedly delivered strikes on the 5th mountain rifle regiment inflicting heavy casualties to the Armenians.

According to Azerbaijani President Ilham Alyiev, in the recent operations Azerbaijani forces captured 22 settlements in the districts of Fuzuli, Jabrayil, and Zangilan. These are Gejagozlu, Ashaghi Seyidahmadli, Zargar, Balyand, Papi, Tulus, Hajili, Tinli, Khurama, Khumarli, Sari Babayli, Ucunju Aghali, Hajalli, Girakh Mushlan, Udgun, Turabad, Ichari Mushlan, Malikli, Jahangirbayli, Baharli and Minjivan. Several Armenian T-72 battle tanks as well as BMP-1 and BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles were also captured by Azerbaijan.

Fierce clashes in the contested region continue as both Armenia and Azerbaijan accuse each other of sabotaging the diplomatic talks on a non-military settlement of their differences. On October 12, Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan even said that there is no diplomatic solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict at this stage.

"Azerbaijan no longer agrees with what we agree or will agree, which means that at this stage it is at least pointless to talk about any diplomatic solution," the Armenian Prime Minister said. Pashinyan also touched on the ongoing battles in Nagorno-Karabakh calling on all Armenians to take arms to repel the Azerbaijani advance. He said that Armenian forces are inflicting heavy losses on the Azerbaijani troops. The PM claimed that more than 10,000 Azerbaijani soldiers have been killed so far. This number exceeds even that claimed by the Armenian Defense Ministry, according to which Azerbaijan has thus far lost 6,459 troops, 584 armoured vehicles and rocket systems, 23 military planes, 16 helicopters and 202 UAVs. Thus, according to the Armenian side, in recent clashes Azerbaijan has lost over 200 personnel.

Even amid the victorious statements about multiple Azerbaijani casualties, the Armenian side admits that clashes have reached the area of the Akari River. Even as Armenia provides few details regarding the current positioning of the sides, this is a de-facto confirmation of the recent Azerbaijani advance.

Meanwhile, Turkey's Vice President Fuat Oktay repeated an earlier claim of the Turkish leadership that his country is ready to openly send its forces to support Azerbaijan if needed. Therefore, even if Armenia is able to stabilize the current situation in the south of Karabakh, Turkey will continue providing Azerbaijan with the means, measures and specialists needed to continue their operations aimed at recapturing the entire region.

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