



'Brilliant' Fighter Decimates 5 Russian Tanks in Single Battle: Ukraine

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One Ukrainian soldier operating a Javelin reportedly destroyed five Russian tanks on Tuesday.

The Ukrainian Ministry of Defense (MoD) tweeted a video taken by the 79th Air Assault Brigade showing the infantry-operated guided missiles shoot and explode multiple tanks on the battlefield in Maryinka, in the Donetsk region. The soldier was described as a "brilliant operator" of the weapon.

"American weapon in Ukrainian hands works wonders," the MoD tweeted.

Numerous Russian tanks have reportedly been destroyed by Ukrainian forces in recent weeks.

Video released Saturday by the Armed Forces of Ukraine showed a Russian T-72B tank obliterated by a landmine in Vuhledar, also in the Donetsk region.

Another video posted last Wednesday by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) showed Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) drop munitions on five Russian T-72 tanks and a 2S3 Akatsiya howitzer.

One day later, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported that Russia lost a total of 16 tanks, 24 armored vehicles and three drones in a 24-hour period.

On Tuesday, the General Staff claimed that 550 Russian troops have been killed in the last 24 hours, upping their death toll since the war's inception to 149,240, and that one-third of the deaths have taken place in the last two months.

U.S. President Joe Biden told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky during his recent visit to Ukraine and Eastern Europe that the U.S. would provide an additional \$500 million in military equipment, including more Javelin anti-tank missile systems.

The Javelin, or FGM-148 as it is officially known, weighs about 49 pounds and was first used in 1996 to allow soldiers to operate and fire warheads over 1.5 miles, according to the *Military Times*. The warhead is guided by an infrared seeker that can travel at a rate of 1,000 feet every seven seconds. The weapon can sit upon a soldier's shoulder or be mounted and fired from the ground.

By last May, the U.S. had already supplied Ukraine with about 7,000 Javelins, or approximately one-third of its stockpile, the Associated Press reported. The U.S. Army awarded Lockheed Martin and Raytheon a joint \$311 million contract in September to increase production.

"We have led the world in providing security assistance—from the Javelins that halted the Russian tanks assaulting Kyiv, to the air defense systems that have intercepted Russian strikes against Ukraine's critical infrastructure, to the armored vehicles that Ukraine needs for the next phase of this conflict," said a White House statement marking the war's one-year anniversary.

The Pentagon reported that more than 8,600 Javelins and 1,600 Stinger anti-aircraft systems have been provided to Ukraine as part of over \$32.4 billion in security assistance to Ukraine since Biden took office.

On Friday, the Department of Defense announced \$2 billion in additional security assistance for Ukraine under the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative.

"The security assistance package reaffirms the steadfast support of the United States for Ukraine by committing additional unmanned aerial systems and counter-UAS and electronic warfare detection equipment, as well as critical ammunition stocks for artillery and precision fires capabilities that will bolster Ukraine's ability to repel Russian aggression," Pentagon spokesman Brigadier General Pat Ryder said.

Jordan Cohen, policy analyst at the Cato Institute, told *Newsweek* that "there is no doubt" that Javelins, in addition to Stinger missiles and High-Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), have been incredibly effective for Ukrainian forces since the war's early days.

"MANPADS (man-portable air defense systems) are traditionally easy to train, are lightweight and portable, and are great for short-range defenses," Cohen said. "They are predominantly used for self-defense, but can also be used when retaking territory.

"I do think that Russia's focus on hitting critical civilian infrastructure, however, has made MANPADS slightly less useful. They are predominantly short-range and Russia is attacking from far distances."

However, he said that probably 90 out of 100 military experts would have never said some 175 days ago that Ukraine would fend off Russia for more than a year—and that MANPADS would help determine the course of the conflict.

Newsweek reached out to the Ukrainian Defense Ministry for comment.